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REMARKS

Introduction

The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 4, 2006. This communication is believed to be a timely and complete response to that Office Action. Claims 1, 2, 5, and 7-23 were pending in the present application prior to entry of the present amendments. By the present Office Action Claims 1, 2, 5, and 7-23 have been rejected.

By the present amendment, Claims 1, 8, 13-15, 17, 18 and 23 have been amended. Claims 7 and 16 have been canceled. No new Claims have been

Support for these amendments can be found in the original specification, and thus, no new matter has been added. Applicant reserves the right to pursue all original Claims in this or other patent applications. Reconsideration and reexamination of the present application is respectfully requested in tight of the foregoing amendments and in view of the following remarks, which establish that the pending Claims are directed to allowable subject matter.

added. Claims 2, 5, 9-12, and 19-22 also remain in the application, and upor entry of the present amendment, Claims 1, 2, 5, 8-15, and 17-23 are present.

SUMMARY OF THE AMENDMENTS

in the Claims

Claims 1, 8, 13-15, 17, 18 and 23 have been amended. Claims 7 and 16 have been canceled. No Claims have been added.

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III. CLAIM REJECTIONS

Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

applicant regards as the invention. for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which The Examiner has rejected Claims 13, 14, 18, and 23 as being indefinite

is unclear with respect to what is being claimed." (Office Action page 2). Claims 13 and 14 have been amended to remove the word "separable" Examiner states that "[i]n line 1 of each of Claims 13 and 14, 'separable'

depend from Claim 17, which provides antecedent basis basis in the claims." (Office Action page 2). Claim 18 has been amended to The Examiner states that "[i]n claim 18, 'said fold line' lacks antecedent

the trough is formed further from." (Office Action page 2). Claim 23 has been the trough is additionally formed from said top and side panels amended to clarify that the word "further" is used as an adjective meaning that The Examiner also states that "[c]laim 23 is unclear with respect to what

Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Bates et al.

102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,929,172 to Bates et al. The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5, 12, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §

(hereinafter referred to as Bates). The Examiner states that "the push tab [90

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Emphasis Added.

In contrast, the profrusions 90,

92 5

Bates are connected to lower

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92] is formed from the displaceable portion in the closed carton and forms a recess insofer as claimed." (Office Action page 3)

Bates talls to disclose all of the limitations of amended Claim 1

amended to recite, in part: displaceable portion, as recited in amended Claim 1. Claim 1 has been Bates does not disclose said push tab being hingedly connected to said

displacable portion upon movement of said push tab into said extends into said carton, said push tab being formed at least in part displaceable portion along said segment, said push tab being entirely across said seam to facilitate detachment of said in part by a segment of said frangible line, said segment extending wherein said opening assist comprises a push tab defined at least end; and an opening assist defined in said end of said carton such endmost article for removal from said carton, said displaceable be at least partially detached from said carton for exposing an a displaceable portion detachably connected to said carton end to pushed position. from said displacable portion such that a recess is defined in said from an initial position to a pushed position where said push tab hingedly connected to said displacable portion to be movable that said opening assist at least partially traverses said seam, portion at least partially defined by a frangible line in said carron

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portions 40, 42 of the composite wall and are clearly not hingedly connected to

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are patentable over the cited art. reproduced below. For at least these reasons, Claim 1 and its dependent claims 62 and weakened line segments 70, 72. See, e.g., FIGs. 1 and 2 of Bates, the trough 100, which is separable from the carton 10 along frangible lines 60,

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Bates fails to disclose all of the limitations of amended Claim 18

Claim 15 has been similarly amended to recite, in part, "a push tab being

hingedly connected to said displaceable portion." The protrusions 90, 92 in

Holley, Jr.

is not anticipated by the cited art.

otherwise not connected to the trough 100. For at least these reasons, Claim 15 protrusions 90, 92 are not hingedly connected to the trough 100 and separable from the trough 100 along weakened line segments 70, 72. Thus, the Bates are connected to lower portions 40, 42 of the composite wall and

pushed to separate the displaceable portion" and "movement of the tab 83 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,176,419 to Holley, Jr. (Office Action page 3). inwardly is considered to produce a recess adjacent edges 84, 86 as claimed." claimed push tab and the tab 83 as a result of the intended use of the tab to be used as an opening assist, i.e. the tab 83...is considered capable of being The Examiner states that "it is noted that no distinction is seen between the requests reconsideration and withdrawal thereof. The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 5, 7, 10, 12, 15, and 16 under 35 Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and

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Holley, Jr. clearly teaches away from the pull tab 83 being pushed to Holley, Jr. fails to disclose all the limitations of amended Claim 1

separate the tear panel 82. In fact, Holley, Jr. discloses in column 5 lines 32-38: 83 accessible. The pull tab 83 is then held by the user's fingers portion 92 of the upper tear lines are broken to render the pull tab and thereby the access tear lines 98 and 100 and the arched [T]he access tab 102 is manually pressed inwardly of the carton,

are patentable over the cited art. reproduced below. For at least these reasons, Claim 1 and its dependent claims 42, 44 rather than in the tear panel 82. FIGs, 1 and 2 of Holley, Jr. are tear panel 82 from the carton 10, a recess would be defined in the side end flaps Further, even if the pull tab 83 were to be pushed inwardly to separate the

84 and 86

and pulled downwardly to resume breaking of the upper tear lines



patentable over the cited art

limitations of Claim 8 and therefore, for at least these reasons, Claim 10 line which defines the pull tab 83. Thus, Holley, Jr. fails to disclose all the

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Holley, Jr. fails to disclose all the limitations of Claim 10

Claim 10 is depends from Claim 8, which recites, in part, "wherein said

Holley, Jr. fails to disclose all the limitations of amended Claim 15

defined in the side end flaps 42, 44 rather than in the tear panel 82. For at least upon movement of said push tab into said pushed position". In column 5 lines these reasons, Claim 15 and its dependent claims are patentable over the cited separate the tear panel 82. Further, even if the pull tab 83 were to be pushed 32-38, Holley, Jr. clearly teaches away from the pull tab 83 being pushed to inwardly to separate the tear panel 82 from the carton 10, a recess would be Claim 15 recites, in part, "a recess is defined in said displaceable portion

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curved portions 94, 96, which are considered part of the segment of the frangible portions 94, 96. Therefore, such a fold line would not be displaced from the fold line would necessarily extend between and connect with the tear line curved 94, 96. Further, even if the pull tab 83 were to be folded to create a fold line, the which is displaced from the tear line portion 92 and the tear line curved portions 83 in Holley, Jr. is not defined by a told line nor, more specifically, a fold line said segment of said frangible line are displaced from one another.* The pull tab push tab is at least partially defined by a fold line...and wherein said fold line and

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art. Claim 16 has been cenceled and the rejection to that Claim is considered

including a push tab 82 formed by overlapping panels 12, 28 forming the end that "Spivey discloses a trough formed from an end area of a carton and being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,578,736 to Splvey. The Examiner states area of the carton as claimed." (Office Action page 4) The Examiner has rejected Claims 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as

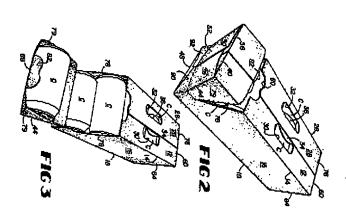
Splyey fails to disclose all the limitations of amended Claim 13

an edge of said trough that is defined by said frangible line" as recited in line 88 which interrupts the tear line 78." For at least these reasons, Claim 13 are reproduced below. In addition, Spivey discloses in column 4, lines 5 and 6: amended Claim 13. Rather, the fold line 88 in Spivey is connected to the tear and its dependent Claim 14 are patentable over the cited art lines 78, 80 which define the edge of the dispenser 79. FIGs. 2 and 3 of Spivey "Finger flap 82 and insertion flap 86 are connected to the dispenser 79 by fold Spivey fails to disclose at least a *trough having a fold line displaced from

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Page 16 of 26 F.2d 1572, 1577 (Fed. Cir. 1984). In re Geiger, 815 F.2d 686, 688 (Fed. Cir. suggestion in a primary reference supporting a modification or combination of the CCPA before it) has repeatedly held that, absent some teaching obviousness when rejecting claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). The CAFC (and references is improper. ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Montefiore Hospital, 732 references, an arbitrary modification of the primary reference or combination of 1987). Also, the Federal Circuit has held that it is improper to modify a reference Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) The Examiner has the burden of establishing a prima facie case of

Dembiczak, 175 F.3d 994 (Fed. Cir. 1999); In re Rouffet, 149 F.3d 1350, 1355 when combined must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. See e.g., In re must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art references art, to modify the references or to combine reference teachings. Second, there themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references (Fed. Cir. 1998); Pro-Mold & Tool Co. v. Great Lakes Plastics, Inc., 75 F.3d 1568, 1573 (Fed. Cir. 1996). See MPEP. § 2142 To establish prime facie case of obviousness, three criteria must be met

facle case of obviousness in support of the rejections of these claims. view of the foregoing, the Examiner has failed to make out a prima Each of

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in the reference. In re Gordon, 733 F.2d 900 (Fed. Cir. 1984)

in a way that destroys the intent, purpose, or function of the invention disclosed

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case law

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the Examiner's rejections will now be discussed in view of the above prevailing

Spivey in view of Harrelson

thus the rejection of that claim is considered moot. of U.S. Patent No. 6,866,185 to Harrelson. Claim 7 has been canceled and remaining claims over Spivey in view of Harrelson are respectfully traversed 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,578,736 to **Spivey** in view The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-12, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. The rejections of the

suggests all of the limitations of the rejected claims. There is no motivation to combine Spivey and Harrelson. Moreover, no combination of Spivey and Harrelson discloses, teaches, or

USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990). MPEP § 2143.01. also suggests the desirability of the combination. In re Mills, 916 F.2d 680, 16 modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art teachings. MPEP § 2142. The mere fact that references can be combined There must be some suggestion or motivation to combine reference

displaceable portion 59 such that a recess or indent is formed in the displaceable displaceable portion when the tab is pushed" but incorrectly asserts that "Harrelson teaches that it is known to make a push tab 60 within the body of a carton except formation of the push tab [82] such that a recess is defined in the The Office Action states that "Splvey discloses all structure of the claimed

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hindsight based upon the applicant's disclosure. MPEP § 2142 invention is presented. Rather, the Office Action impermissibly resorts to motivation or suggestion to combine these references to obtain the claimed arguendo, the existence of these limitations in the cited references, demonstrated below, Harrelson does not include this limitation. Even assuming portion when the tab is pushed inwardly." (Office Action page 4). Š

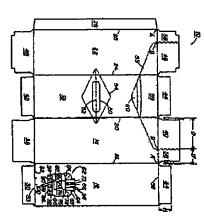
The combination of Spivey and Harrelson fails to disclose all of the limitations of amended Claim 1

of the cited prior art references disclose at least the above limitations of Claim 1. dispensing flap 59. Rather, in FIG. 2, Spivey discloses a recess is defined in Harrelson disclose a recess that is defined in the respective dispenser 79 and these reasons, Claim 1 and its dependent claims are patentable over the cited of Claim 1, either as originally filed or as amended. Spivey and Harrelson when combined fail to teach or suggest all the limitations panel 18 upon movement of finger flap 60 into a pushed position. Since neither position, and Harrelson, in FIG. 1, discloses a recess that is defined in the top overlapping top flaps 12, 28 upon movement of finger flap 82 into a pushed reproduced above and FIG. 1 of Harrelson is reproduced below. For at least upon movement of said push tab into said pushed position." Neither Spivey nor Claim 1 recites, in part, 'a recess is defined in said displaceable portion FIG. 2 of Spilvey is

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Neither Spivey nor Harrelson discloses the limitations of Amended Claim 8.

The Examiner states that "it is noted that the distal end of the fab is considered to be displaced from the foldline in either Spivey or Harrelson." (Office Action page 5). Claim 1 recites, in part, "a push tab defined at least in part by a segment of said frangible line" and Claim 8 recites, in part, "said push tab is at least partially defined by a fold line...and wherein said fold line and said segment of said frangible line are displaced from one another." Amended Claim 8 depends from Claim 1. It appears that the Examiner misunderstands the Applicant's meaning, in that "displaced from one another" is intended to indicate that the fold line and the frangible line segment are disposed apart from one another. Neither reference teaches or discloses such a relationship.

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In FIGs. 2 and 3, *Spivey* discloses a finger flap 82 defined by a fold line 88 and tear line 80 (considered to be a segment of tear line 78 in that both tear lines 78, 80 define the edge of the dispenser 79). The ends of the fold line 88 and the segment of frangible line 80 clearly connect and, therefore, the fold line 88 and the tear line 80 are not displaced from one another. In FIG. 1, *Harrelson* discloses a fold line connecting the finger flap 60 and the dispensing flap 59. The finger flap 60 is defined by the fold line and the tear line 55. The ends of the fold line and the tear line 55 clearly connect and, therefore, the fold line and the tear line 55 are not displaced from one another. For at least these reasons, Claim 8 and its dependent claims are patentable over the cited art.

Claim 11 depends from Claims 1 and 8, and thus is patentable for the reasons presented above, as well as for at least the following reasons. Claim 11 recites, in part, "said push tab is defined further by a pair of tear lines each extending between said fold line and said segment of said frangible line."

Spivey fails to disclose tear lines that define the finger flap 82 and which extend between the fold line 88 and the tear line 80 (which is considered to be a segment of the tear line 78). Harrelson similarly fails to disclose tear lines that define the finger flap 60 and extend between the fold line 65 and extend between the fold line 65 and extend between the fold line 65 that defines that finger flap 60. Since neither of the cited prior art references disclose at least the finger flap 60. Since neither of the cited prior art references disclose at least

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the above limitation of Claim 11, the combination of *Spivey* and *Harrelson* cannot teach or suggest all the limitations of Claim 11.

The Examiner stated that '[i]t would have been obvious to make the push tab in Spivey as taught by Harrelson to allow easier tearing of the end of the displaceable portion, i.e. tearing along straight angled tear lines is easier than tear lines perpendicular to the pulling direction." (Office Action page 4). However, angled tear lines are not recited in the claims and do not define a push

Killey in view of Holley, Jr.

tab as claimed.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, and 5-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,396,143 to *Killey* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,176,419 to *Holley, Jr.* The Examiner states that "*Killey* discloses all structure of the claimed carton except formation of the opening essist (54, 56) push tab along an overlapping seam formed by the end of the carton. *Holley, Jr.* teaches that it is known to make the opening assist on a displaceable portion at the end of a carton along the seam formed between two overlapping flaps." (Office Action page 5). Claims 6 and 7 have been cancelled and the rejections of these Claims are considered moot.

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The combination of Killey and Holley, Jr. falls to disclose all of the limitations of amended Claim 1

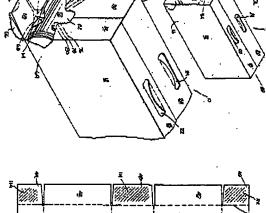
54, 56 and tear panel 82. Rather, the finger hole 82 in Killey is defined in left limitations of amended Claim 1. FIGs. 2 and 3 of Killey are reproduced below Claim 1, the combination of Killey and Holley, Jr. falls to disclose all of the neither of the cited prior art references disclose at least the above limitations of pushed position. The recess in Holley, Jr. is defined in the side end flaps 42, 44 and right end closure flaps 30, 32 upon movement of linger tabs 102, 104 into a 1 and its dependents are patentable over the cited art and FIG. 1 of Holley, Jr. is reproduced above. For at least these reasons, Claim upon movement of pull tab 83 or access tab 102 into a pushed postion. Since Holley, Jr. disclose a recess that is defined in the respective torn out portions upon movement of said push tab into said pushed posttion.* Neither Killey nor Claim 1 recites, in part, "a recess is defined in said displaceable portion

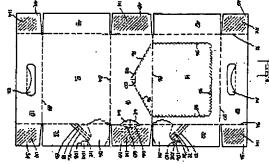
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Finger tabs 102, 104 of Killey are defined by straight score lines 110, 112

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Neither Killey nor Holley, Jr. disclose the limitations of amended Claim 8

8 depends from amended Claim 1. tab is at least partially defined by a fold line...and wherein said fold line and said segment of said frangible line" and amended Claim 8 recites, in part, "said push segment of said frangible line are displaced from one another.* Amended Claim Amended Claim 1 recites, in part, "a push tab defined at least in part by a

and curved score lines 106, 108. An end of each of the straight score line 110. -Page 23 of 26-

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therefore, the straight score line 110/112 and curved score line 106/108 are not displaced from one another. *Holley, Jr.* fails to disclose a fold line connecting the pull tab 83 to the tear away panel 82. Further, *Holley, Jr.* teaches away from pushing the pull tab 83 and even if the pull tab 83 is pushed, the pull tab 83 would fold along a line that extends between the curved portions 94, 96 would clearly connect and, therefore, the fold line and the curved portions 94, 96 are not displaced from one another. Neither of the cited prior art references disclose at least the above claim limitations and thus, for at least these reasons, Claim 8 and its dependents are patentable over the cited art.

Killey in view of Holley, Jr. falls to disclose the limitations of Claim

3

Claim 11 recites, in part, "said push tab is defined further by a pair of tear lines each extending between said fold line and said segment of said frangible line." Neither *Killey* nor *Holley*, *Jr.* disclose at least these of Claim 11. The finger tabs 102, 104 in *Killey* are defined by a straight score line 110/112 and a curved score line 106/108, but are not defined by a pair of tear lines extending between the straight score line 110/112 and the curved score line 106/108. *Holley*, *Jr.* discloses a pull tab 83 that is defined by the straight portion 92, curved portions 84, 86 and a fold line which is assumed to be formed upon

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pushing the pull tab 83. The straight portion 92 and the curved portions 84, 96 are considered to be the segment of the frangible line which defines the pull tab 83. *Holley, Jr.* falls to disclose tear lines which further define the pull tab 83 in addition to the straight portion 92, curved portions 94, 98, and fold line. Since neither of the prior art references disclose at least the above limitations of Claim 11, the combination of Killey and Holley, Jr. fall to disclose the limitations of Claim 11. For at least these reasons Claim 11 is patentable over the cited art.

Killey in view of Holley, Jr. fails to disclose the ilmitations of amended Claim 15

Claim 15 recites, in part, "a recess is defined in said displaceable portion upon movement of said push tab into said pushed position." Neither *Killey* nor *Halley, Jr.* disclose a recess that is defined in the respective torn out portions 54, 56 and tear panel 82. Rather, in FIGs. 2 and 3, a finger hole 82 of *Killey* is defined in left and right end closure flaps 30, 32 upon movement of finger tabs 102, 104 into a pushed position. In FIG. 1, a recess of *Halley, Jr.* is defined in the side end flaps 42, 44 upon movement of pull tab 83 or access tab 102 into a pushed position. Since neither of the cited prior art references disclose at least the limitations of amended Claim 15, the combination of Killey and Holley, Jr. fail to disclose the limitations of amended Claim 15. For at least these reasons, Claim 15 and the claims that depend therefrom are patentable over the cited art.

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Attorney Docket No.: D-3126

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IV. CONCLUSION

For at least the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the Claims pending in this case and issuance of a patent containing these Claims in due course. Should Examiner Elkins believe that a telephone conference would be useful to resolve any concerns and move this application to allowance, Examiner Elkins is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below. Otherwise, Applicant respectfully requests timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance for the present application.

Respectfully submitted

Cynthia R. Parks Reg. No. 52,096 Attorney for Applicant

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